

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraphs 20 to 24 with the following paragraphs.

[0020] In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a flow field plate for a fuel cell, the flow field plate having a front side, for defining a-chambers with another complementary flow field plate ~~for~~ and a membrane electrode assembly, and a rear side, the flow field plate including:

[0021] at least two apertures for a reactant gas for supply to said chambers to provide for reactant gas flow along the membrane electrode assembly;

[0022] on the front side thereof, reactant gas flow ~~field~~-channels;

[0023] for each of the apertures, an aperture extension extending on the rear side of the flow field plate; and

[0024] for each aperture ~~at least one slot~~ a plurality of slots extending through the flow field plate from the back side to the front side thereof, the plurality of slots being disposed adjacent to the extension on the rear side of the flow field plate and adjacent to the reactant gas flow channels on the front side of the flow field plate to provide fluid communication between the corresponding ~~aperture~~ extension and the reactant ~~action~~ gas flow channels.

Please replace paragraphs 25 to 30 with the following paragraphs.

[0025] In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a fuel cell assembly including at least one fuel cell, wherein each fuel cell comprises:

[0026] first and second complementary flow field plates, each including a front sides and rear side, with the front ~~surfaces~~ sides facing one another and defining a fuel cell chamber;

**[0027]** a membrane electrode assembly and gas diffusion media provided within the fuel cell chamber;

**[0028]** at least two first apertures in each flow field plate for a first reactant gas and at least two second apertures in each flow field plate for a second reactant gas;

**[0029]** wherein the first flow field plate includes: first reactant gas flow channels on the front side thereof; first slots extending from the first reactant gas flow channels to the rear side thereof; for each of the first apertures thereof, on the rear ~~side~~ side thereof, a first ~~aperture extension~~ disposed between the first aperture and the corresponding first slots, for providing communication ~~therebetween the first apertures thereof and said first slots~~; and

**[0030]** wherein the second flow field plate includes: second reactant gas flow channels on the front side thereof; second slots extending from the second reactant gas flow channels to the rear side thereof; for each of the second apertures thereof, on the rear side thereof, a second ~~aperture extension~~ disposed between the second aperture and the corresponding second slots for; providing fluid communication ~~therebetween the second apertures thereof and said second slots~~.

Please replace paragraph 66 with the following paragraph.

**[0066]** An innermost groove segment 174, for the aperture 140 is set in a greater distance, as compared to the groove segment 155. This enables flow channels 176 to be provided extending under the groove segment 155. At least one ~~Transfer~~ slots 178 ~~are is~~ then provided for enabling flow of gas from one side of the flow field plate to the other. As shown in Figure 3, these slots emerge on the front side of the flow field plate, and a channel network is provided to distribute the gas flow evenly across the front side of the plate. The complete rectangular grooves around the apertures 136, 138 and 140 in Figure 4 are designated 182, 184 and 186 respectively.

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Reply to Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment of March 17, 2005

Please replace paragraph 88 with the following paragraph.

**[0088]** Thus, aperture extensions 230 are provided for the apertures 136, 137 of the cathode plate 130. On the front of the cathode flow field plate, all of the apertures 136-141 are closed off, and for the apertures 136, 137 inner groove segments 231 are provided. At least one ~~T~~transfer slots 180 are is provided for connecting the fluid flow channels on the front face indicated at 236 to the rear face. On the rear face, the aperture extensions 230 include projections 232 defining flow channels 233, providing communication between the aperture 136, 137 and the transfer slots 180, and supporting the groove segments 231.